BINGANG
december 1986

special notice!

CAREFULLY REMOVE THIS OUTER WRAPPER BY TEARING LOOSE FROM THE
DO NOT TEAR OFF THE COLORED SHEETS IMMEDIATELY UNDER THE WRAP
ARE THE OUTER COVERS OF YOUR MAGAZINE.

BINGANG

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF CLUB CROSBY FOUNDED IN 1936
Post Office Box 8283 • Sacramento, California 95818

FIRS

PLEASE DELIVER TO

TWO STAPLES
PER _ THEY

AIR MAIL

T CLASS MAIL

RINTED MATTER

KEN W. CROSSLAND
7 WHEATCROFT VIEW
LANDMERE COURT, WEST BRIDGFORD
NOTTINGHAM NG2 7PE
ENGLAND

BINGANG

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF CLUB CROSBY FOUNDED IN 1936
Post Office Box 8283 • Sacramento, California 95818

ALSTON W. SUTTON *President-Editor*
MORTON B. MILLER *Vice President-Treasurer*

VOLUME LI, NO. 2 july- december, 1986

COVER - A GREETING FROM A FAMOUS CARICATURIST

EDITOR'S PAGES 4-5

JOE WHO? An introduction to someone you know and admire 6

CROSBY CARTOONS AND CARICATURES 7 20
The collecting specialty of the
"Wonderful Webfoot" is revealed

A GRAND BAND; Or, "Why Wasn't This Recorded for Posterity? 21

WHITEMAN DAYS - ARTISTS AND CHARACTERS 22 - 26
Jack Fulton tells of his days with Bing
and others in the fabulous Whiteman Band.

A PAGE DEDICATED TO VERN L. VASEY 27

Membership in Club Crosby is open to all collectors who wish to help in preserving the memory of Bing Crosby's many talents. Membership fee is $10 per calendar year in the United States and Canada, $15 per calendar year elsewhere, payable in advance in US funds or their equivalent. No foreign bank drafts, or foreign currency accepted. Mail your application and fee to the above address.

BINGANG is always eager to welcome new writers to its pages. Submit your article to the editor at the above address. It need not be typed. Don't worry about style or grammar - it will all be checked carefully here. Full credit will be given to the author. Material accepted for publication in BINGANG may not be reprinted elsewhere for 18 months.

This may well be the last opportunity for Al Sutton to make any editorial comment in BINGANG, so here goes!

I think I would be remiss if I didn't tell you, one and all, that I have fully enjoyed myself over the last six or seven years. The subject matter has been in my special field of interest, and we have been fortunate in finding authors who subscribed to the same philosophy as your editor. Whether this has been a winning combination or not depends upon you, the readers. If you have read each issue feeling that you were learing something new, and for real, about Bing, then all has not been in vain.

We have editorially repeated that we were striving to be more than just another "fan" magazine. It seems that the adoring, gushy type of tribute to a performer eventually does him in, and alienates the readers also. Rather, we have tried to continue a series of articles and reprints that had been carefully researched in the first place.

One thing the present officers feel they can take pride in - they have not joined in with the caravan of "friends", "Fans", or "associates" of Bing who have felt an obligation to uncover and flaunt their knowledge of some of Bing's less=than-perfext moments. While the incidents noted elsewhere may or may not have been true, they certainly added nothing to Bing's stature, and only served to identify the protagonists for the slime-admiring half-lifes that they are. While Bing achieved more than almost any man could aspire to, he certainly did not lead an entirelyidyllic existence. Perhaps some of the unevenness of life's road was attributable to him, perhaps not. I for one, don't feel qualified to argue either side of the question. But I do know that Bing was an individual who lived andmade his mark outside the perimeters of these shortcomings, and it is the man who succeeded as an artist and entertainer in spite of his friends who fascinates andenchants the real Crosby appreciator.

I have nothing but contempt for those "in the know" who can't wait to tell all the world about the delicious slimy gossip that has come up about a person. And when that person goes into print, but still protests that he admires Bing, I say ""_____") (expletive deleted). He, or she, must look elsewhere for admiring pats on the head.

In the course of serving as your editor, and erstwhile president, I have had the opportunity to meet many of you face-to-face; others I know through the goodservices of the Telephone; still others, solely through correspondence. I have been associated with groups of one sort and another all of my cpnscious life, and I firmly believe that the people joined together in Club Crosby and its sister organizations are, with but few exceptions (and both of you know who you are!) the nicest group of people to call "Friends" in all of creation. The true Crosby person is almost as interested in helping his fellow collector gain his goals as he is in achieving his (pardon us! Hos, or Her) own goals. I have yet to lose a cent over any deal with any Crosby person - more than can be said even for the Boy Scouts!

WHen this is all turned over to the new officers, I will feel a real sense of loss, for BINGANG has been a purpose in my life the last several years. I know I am a better person for having known all of you, and I trust that some of you have had a spark struck through our contact.

I expect to remain active in Crosbyana for some time to come, and I have no intention of liquidating my collection. I do hope that when my ownership lapses, that it will all go topresent members of Club Crosby with whom I have enjoyed trading and arguing with. So far, however, I have succeeded in outliving the beneficiaries of my good intentions, and I'd like to keep it that way, if it doesn't work too much harship on too many people.

Something should be said for the wives of all avid collectors - and wives of Crosby collectors, particularly. Someone who is not a dyed-in-the-wool Crosby "nut" can fully appreciate theobsession that rides the collector, and even sways his better judgement in matters other than Crosbyana. In my own case, thre would never have been more than one issue of BINGANG under my aegis had it not been for my good wife who backed me up - jacked me up - racked me up - and finally, stacked me up. When anyone talks about the hours given up by the officers of a club to serve to benefit others, they aren;t talking about the officers - they are engaged in their hobby every inch of the way, and they get so much more than they give! It is the wives who make the sacrifices of time - time that the husband once gave to the family - suddenly there is no time for anything but the next deadline. There is nothing more important than getting together with a couple of members who re going record-shop-crawling. Ask any wife. (Not mine, please. I've heard her version, and it is touching, and correct).

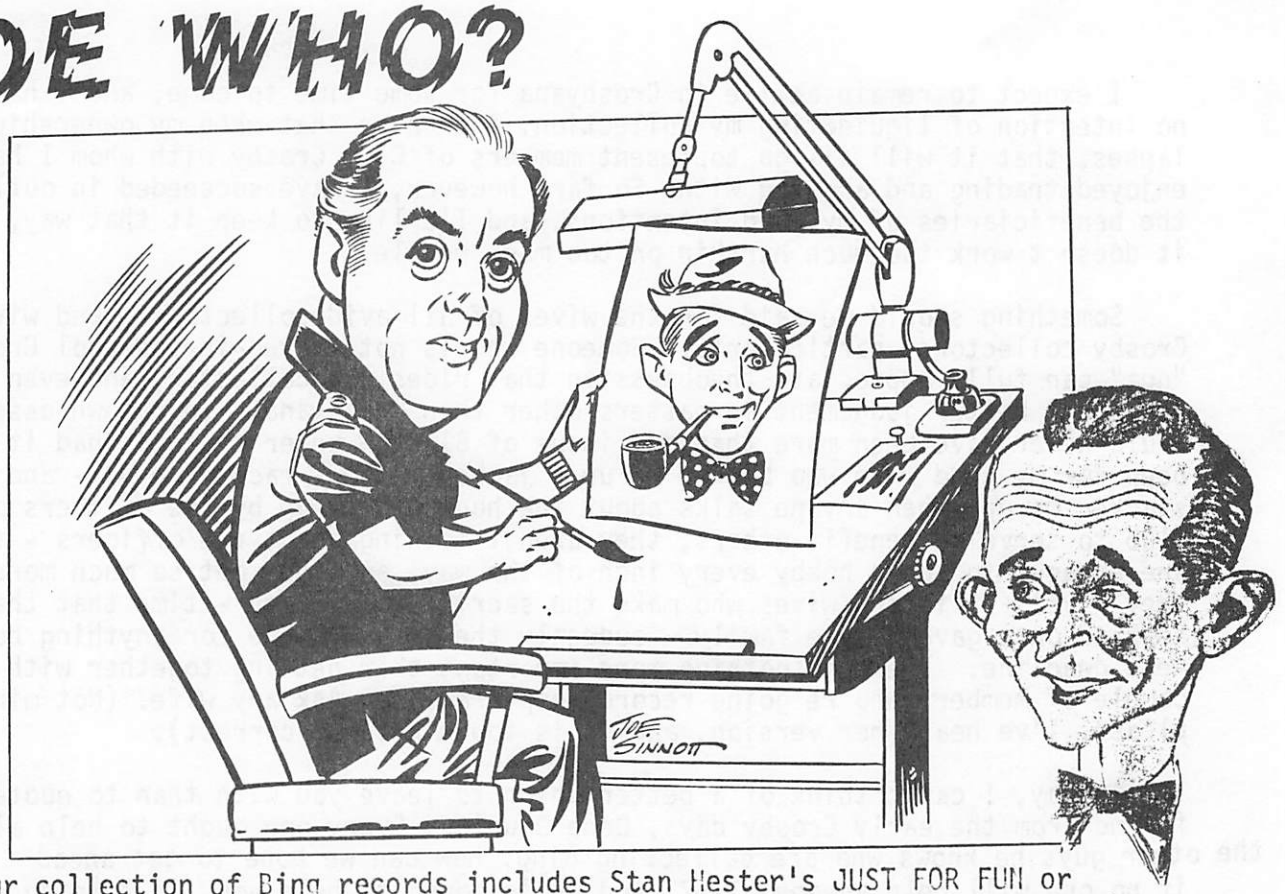
Anyway, I can't think of a better thing to leave you with than to quote my friend from the early Crosby days, Gene Douglas: Every one ought to help all the other guys he knows who are collecting Bing. How can we hope to get ahead if no one will help anyone else? And who's goung to help you, if helping out is looked down on by everybody?"

I'll still be at the old stand. I'd appreciate hearing from you from time to time, if you won't be too critical about my promptness in writing. Address me at my home, 1071 Perkins Way, Sacramento, California 95818. Any Crosby person will be greetedwarmly there regardless of how the contact is made!

●●●

JOE WHO?

VERN VASEY



If your collection of Bing records includes Stan Hester's JUST FOR FUN or CROSBY AND COMO, on the "Broadway Intermission" label, or some of Larry Kiner's many releases of Bing's radio material on "Spokane" label, you undoubtedly have some examples of jackets with a cartoon cover by a fellow named Joe Sinnott. If you have the Bishop and Bassett book "Bing - Just For The Record" - Joe did the cover. If you're a long-time member of Club Crosby, your collection of BINGANG undoubtedly has many Joe Sinnott cartoons for covers.

So just who IS Joe Sinnott? With that much talent, along with his obvious interest in Bing, the answer to that question must be worth digging for . .so we dug.

To start, Joe has been a very valuable contributing member of Club Crosby for many years, as is proven elsewhere in this issue by several of his earlier covers. Born in Saugerties, New York, two days before Bing cut his first record, Joe became aware of Bing in his early teens because his mother was hooked on a daily recorded Bing show on WNEW; she used to sing-along with Bing, which explains Joe's preference for songs and recordings from the 1939 era.

In WW II, one of the Navy SeaBees who passed through Camp Hueneme, near LA, Joe met Bing on the street in Hollywood, coming out of a tobacco shop, stuffing his pipe. He still has Bing's autograph from this chance meeting in 1945, when the Groaner was the biggest thing in the country next to FDR..

After duty on Okinawa, he came back to NY City and attended the School of Visual Arts, then went into comic books for Marvel Comics,eventually doing "Spider Man" and "The Incredible Hulk", plus a lot of book illustrations. He and his wife Betty live in Saugerties, a little village on the Hudson just below the Catskills, with their four children and two grandchildren all within a couple of miles which, he says, is "Just Great!"

We've only met by letter and 'phone, but we're mightly pleased to share Bing and Club Crosby with him so long as he shares his caricatures with us.

Crosby cartoons & caricatures

vern vasey

Bing Crosby collectors, one would assume, collect the phonograph records of Bing Crosby. This is the truth, but certainly not the WHOLE truth. A new member of Club Crosby soon discovers that his (or her, Vern!) fellow members collect recordings, but also collect other memorabilia of Our Hero such as sheet music of songs he sang or with his picture on the cover - -or both; tapes of his radio shows; video tapes of his motion pictures and TV shows; photographs and snapshots; magazines with Bing on the cover; books about him or in which he plays a part; a variety of charm bracelets, medallions, and games that were used as promotional items by one of his sponsors. You name it, someone out there collects it. It would come as no surprise to learn that someone has a collection of Minute Maid cans! Me? Along with recordings, I collect cartoons and caricatures of Bing.

Fortunately - or unfortunately - the collection doesn't take up a lot of space. Because Bing, a man "whose voice has been heard by more people than the voice of any other human being who ever lived" (to quote Decca), and whose face was probablyinstantly recognizable to almost as many, actually had no one physical characteristic which could be satirized or exaggerated to the point of identification. Jilly Durante's or Barbra Streisand's nose, Eddie Cantor's eyes - or Carol Channings eyes, for that matter, Groucho's moustache, Maurice Chevalier's lower lip, Mae West's...well, these could all be cartooned with a very few strokes of a pen. But Bing's appearance was simply Mr. Joe Average. The ears, which he called "wingy" and "like a taxi with both doors open" weren't all that much; the eyebrows ran uphill toward the center but that wouldn't be enough; his pipe was used in cartoons long after he gave up nicotine; and his ever-present hat was a help. But Bing was not an easy subject to a cartoonist.

Far back in the dearly-departed past, yours truly did a bit or cartooning to avoid fruitful labIr. A caricature was the toughest of all assignments, and I found Bing an insurmountable strain on my limited talents. I'm happy to report that the professionals found him not wholly impossible, and I'd like to share some of my collection with the rest of you collectors.

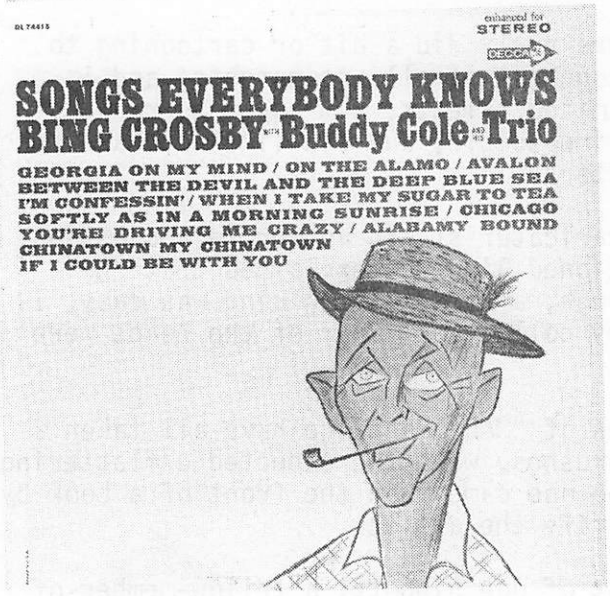
Al Hirschfeld, the master show-business caricaturist, in answer to a question about ease of caricaturing some people, mentioned Bing and explained that "he looked like his caricatures". Strangely, though, after claiming Bing was easy, I found that four of the five Hirschfelds in my collection, four of the heads were duplicates. Mighty curious.

Mort Drucker, Bob Clarke and Angelo Torres of "MAD" Magazine have all taken a whack at Bing with their talented pens and brushes, with the expected unflattering but very clever results. Another Unflattering one came from the front of a book by Bill Cholis, but I haven't been able to identify the artist.

Many of my collection come from the output of Joe Sinnott, a fellow-member of Club Crosby whose work most of you certainly recognize. The only possible compl+ aint I could come up with is that his stuff is so darned good that they are more like portraits than cartoons. How Joe manages to do so many record jackets and other Crosby connected things, and still stay ahead of his deadline with Marvel Comics is a mystery to me! This gentleman has to draw with both hands! I think I'm most proud of one he did for a proposed release of the first KMH Show, with Bing, Jimmy Dorsey, Joe Venuti and Don Wilson, partly because the record project fell by the wayside, but I have the cartoon!

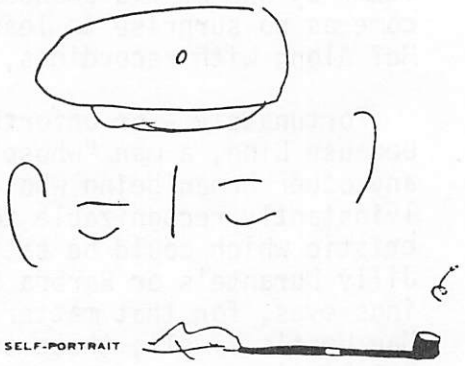
Another member whose work is in my collection is the fellow from "Down Under", Gordon Wall. He did the collage which was the coverof SPOKANE's :Bing and Connee On The Air", plus a lot of decoration for BINGANG, most recently the full-pager of the staff and contributors involved in what possibly could be called golf. After getting acquainted with Gordon by mail, he even contributed several Australian caricatures of Bing to my collection, plus one he did himself that is another of my favorites.

This is undoubtedly more than the editor has space for (on the contrary, old friend - there's always room for one more gem from Beaverton) but I would like to end by saying that even Bing was not above attempting a cartoon self-portrait, in the mid-40s for Life Magazine. To be honest, Sinnott, Drucker and Hirschfeld had nothing to fear - but I like it. WIsh I had the original!



BING CROSBY

by BING CROSBY



Line of work: Actor.

But what would you really rather do? The same thing. Should it fail to go as well, I would like to write.

Mainspring: Because I became a singer it would be my mother. When I was growing up she insisted on me singing whenever possible —even though at that time I saw nothing in it.

Most paradoxical quality: Don't think I have any.

Chinks in the armor: I have no armor. It seems to me I am very simple, uncomplicated and quite transparent.

Boiling point: Golf, when it's going badly. Noisy picture theatres.

Personal panacea: Back to golf, hopefully.

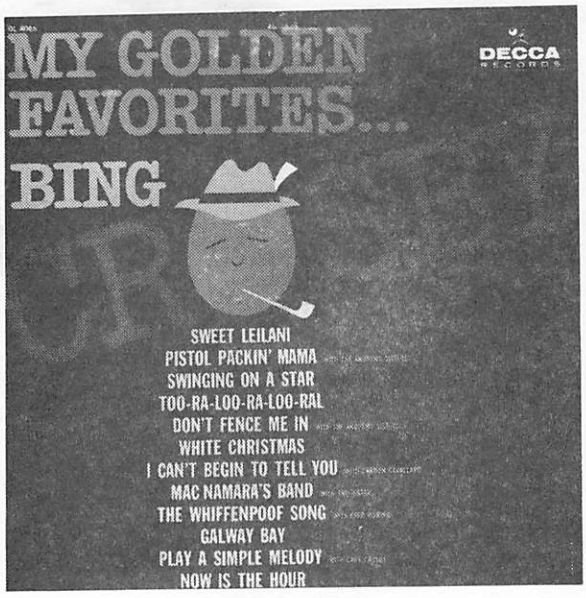
Persisting superstitions: Ladders, hat on the bed, Friday the thirteenth, though I don't think any of them have any genuine influence.

The terrible temptation: The groaning board.

Unfounded fears: Can't think of any.

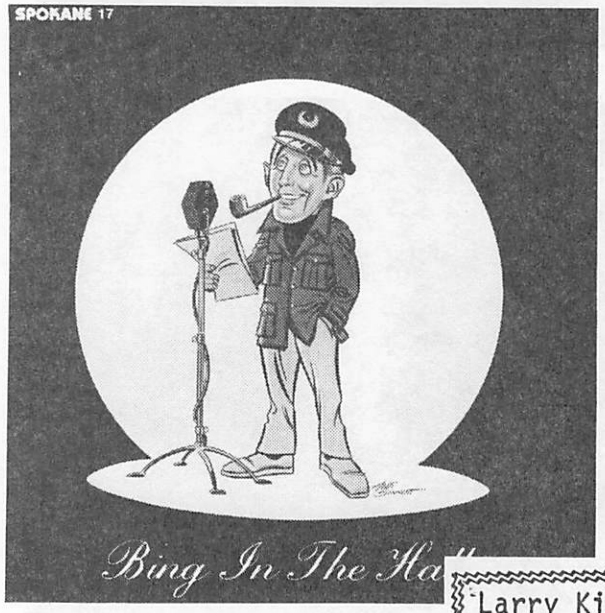
Bing doodled this self-portrait while being interviewed by LIFE Magazine in mid-1940. Even Bing had trouble with his likeness!

Bing has many faces - or sometimes, none at all!. A random assortment of album covers , showing several approaches to the artist's impression of Bing.



Here's a real "doggy" one

A Gordon Wall collage



Larry Kiner's "Spokane" label has featured Joe Sinnott's work for years

THIS FINE ARTISTIC EFFORT ENDED UP AS A "BROADWAY-INTERMISSIONS" COVER

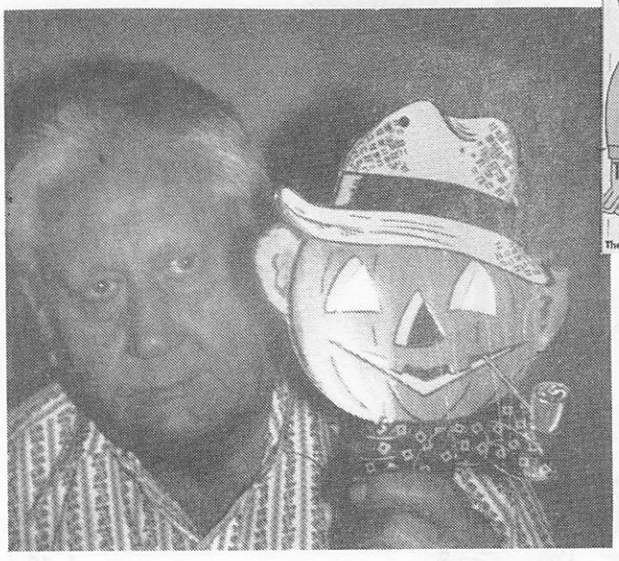
DON WILSON, JIMMY DORSEY, BING AND JOE VENUTI FOR AN ALBUM THAT DIDN'T "GO"

CHECK THE NEXT PAGE TO SEE WHERE THIS LIMNING OF BING WENT.

FROM AN ABANDONED RECORD ALBUM GROUPING, TO A SOLO SUCCESS ALBUM AND BOOK!

GORDON WALL DID THIS ORIGINAL FOR MY COLLECTION. THE POSE BY BING WAS FEATURED ON GORDON'S "GOING HOLLYWOOD" SERIES, VOLUMES 5, 8, 11, AND 14, WITH THE ADDITION OF BOB HOPE AND A PALM TREE.

Memories of Ralph Harding and the CROSBY COLLECTOR

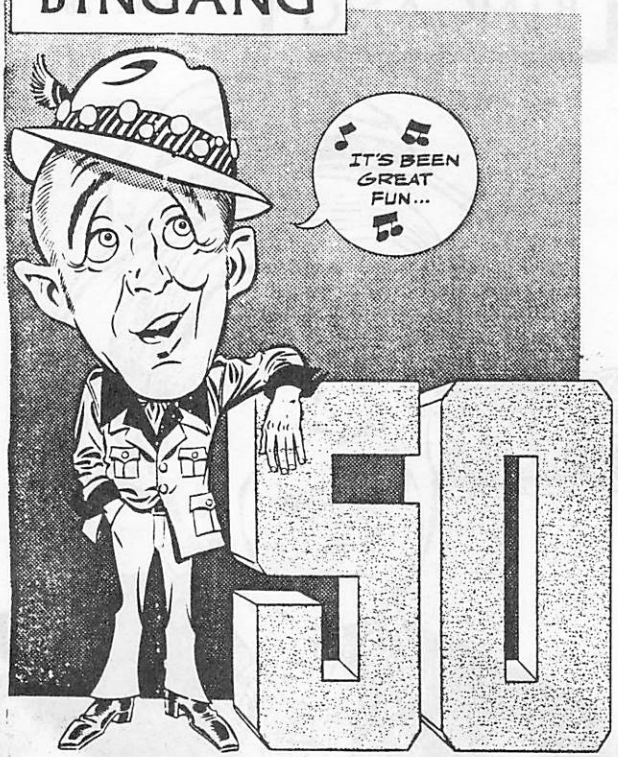


MARSTON TOLTON & his punkinhead friend

BINGANG June '74

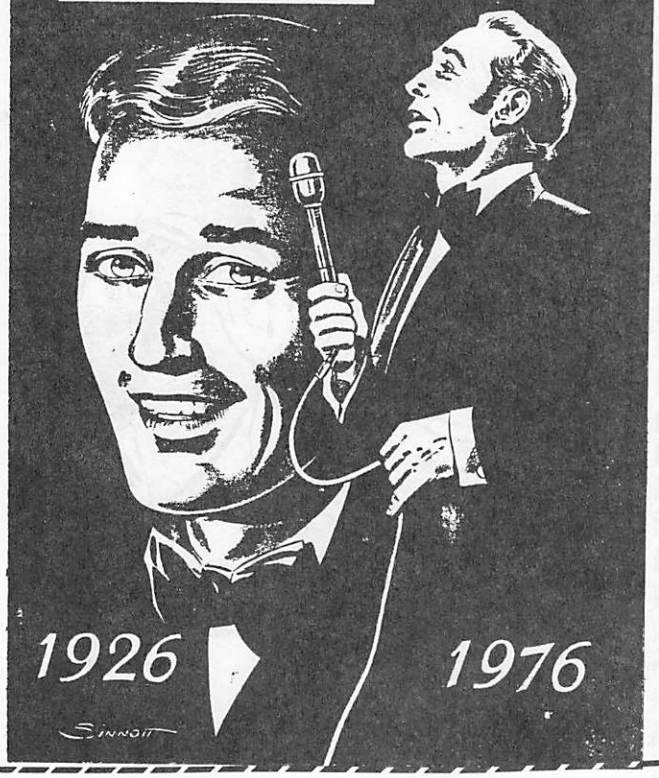
BINGANG March '75

BINGANG March '76



for us too Bing...

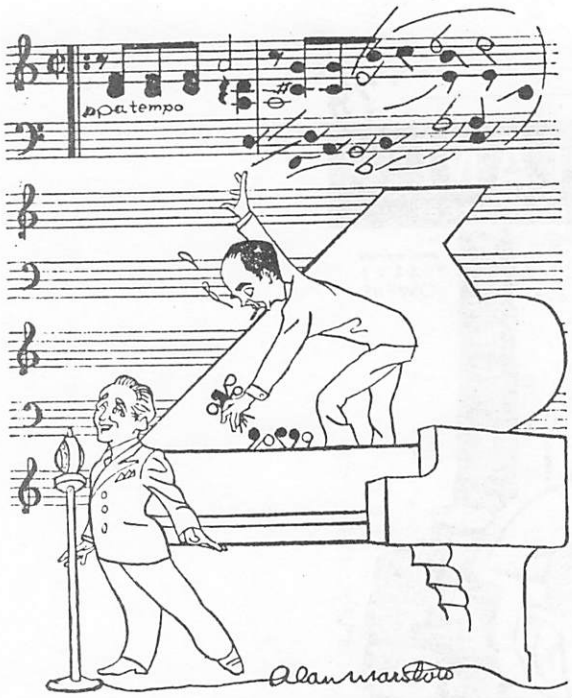
BINGANG



Bing talks to Bingang ! Aug.'77

This cover, and it's accompanying article, brought sheet music collecting into focus as an honorable and active pursuit for Bing Crosby devotees. This, the first cataloging of sheet music with Bing's picture on the cover, or with some mention of Bing somewhere on the cover, listed between 500 and 600 sheets from the collections of Mark Scrimger and Al Sutton. While no current and accurate tally is available, it is safe to say that the two collections now hold some **1500 different** Crosby-related sheets. And the number continues to climb sufficiently fast to make it difficult to take an accurate tally. But of more importance than the size of these two collections is the fact that many of our members have been encouraged to enter this specialized field with the assurance that there is plenty "out there to get".

And let's not forget our young friend GREGG HAMMOND, who is up and coming[



Crosby and Harry Barris caricatured as they appeared while performing at the Grove in the '30s.

"Say, some of these characters look familiar to me["

uncredited

Credited to Al Kilgore of Columbia Records. See immediately above; who traced whose?

Bob Clarke of "Mad"

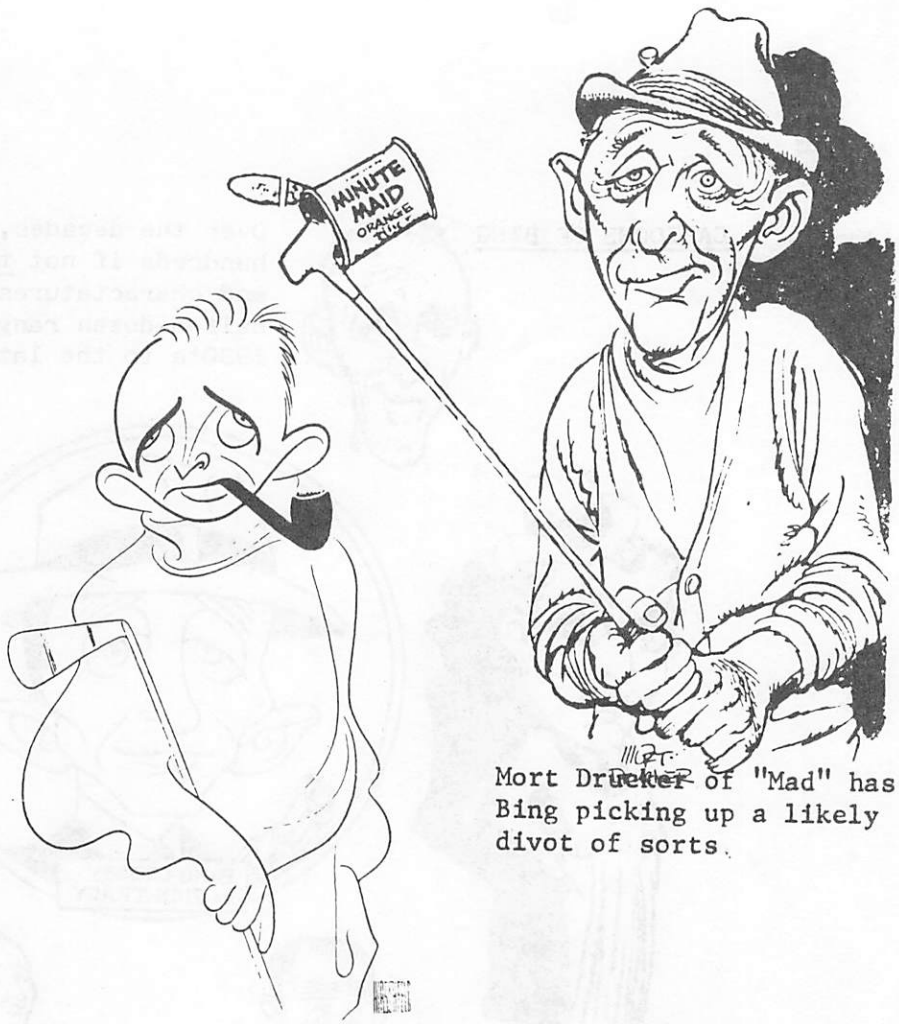
Uncredited

CARTOONS OF BING

Over the decades, there must have been hundreds if not thousands of cartoons and charactatures of Bing. Here are half-a-dozen ranging from the early 1930's to the late 1960's.

As is so often the case, our Australian friends beat us to the punch on this mATTER OF CARTOONS. We hope the officers of our sister club won't take offense at our reproducing this page from a recent copy of the "CROSBY VOICE", and we'd like to take this opportunity to encourage them to keep up their excellent work in keeping the memory of Bing Crosby green and fresh in the memories of all.

Bing Crosby



Mort Drucker of "Mad" has Bing picking up a likely divot of sorts.

63 Grace Kelly and Bing Crosby in THE COUNTRY GIRL. 1954

79 Bob Hope and Bing Crosby in THE ROAD TO HONG KONG. 1962

an unhistoric nonevent?

A Grand Band! Or, "Why Wasn't This Recorded for Posterity?"

Here was a musical group worthy of note, even if they couldn't play one! Jack Benny on the violin; Dick Powell on the trumpet; Ken Murray with the clarinet; Shirley Ross on the piano; Tommy Dorsey playing his trombone; and, out front, Bing Crosby assaulting the drums.

We can bemoan the fact that such a group would play together without some A & R man signing them up for an album. But wait just a moment, and reflect. We've all heard Benny's violin - and who ever heard of Dick Powell or Ken Murray as musicians? Shirley Ross - "I'll Cry Tomorrow" - may have had musical reasons for doing so. Bing, we have heard on cymbal, but there's a lot more there than brass for Bing to pound on, and it might drown out the only musician there, Tommy Dorsey.

So, let's let it go as just a photographer's idea of a cute pose, and preserve our melodic memories, based on firmer evidence!.

WHITEMAN DAYS -

"..When it's all said and done, when it's all over with, he (Bing) was one of the greatest things that happened to the business, the country and the world. He came out of a band in which Whiteman was the biggest thing that ever happened....and Bing ended up being bigger than Whiteman["

..... *JACK FULTON*

MORT MILLER

The relentless hands of time keep tolling the inexorable passage of the years. There are only a few men alive today who were members of the Paul Whiteman Orchestra when Bing Crosby - -a glittering diamond in the rough - was a part of the illustrious musical organization. Kurt Dieterle, the violinist and "Pops" concert master, is still active in the music world as he enters his ninth decade. Bill Challis, the innovative arranger who was featured in the Spring 1983 issue of BINGANG, still recalls the young crooner from Spokane with fond recollection. A bit of investigative sleuthing conducted with sheer persistence, recently uncovered yet another Whiteman alumnus, JACK FULTON. For the author, who has researched and written of the legendary Whiteman and his group of phenomenally talented musicians during the past few years, making contact with Fulton was akin to a prospector discovering the Mother Lode. As with Bill Challis, a warm friendship has resulted from our meeting. The following article is the essence and substance of two taped interviews - - the first held in Jack's and his wife Thelma's home, the latter in the author's.

-0-

Jack Fulton's memories of Bing during the Whiteman years are still in relatively sharp focus. For example, he remembers watching young Crosby and Rinker doing their act at a Los Angeles theater, prior to being hired by Whiteman. Although the boys were inexperienced and lacked professional finesse, the act was different, unique.

Jack recalls vividly why Bing and Al "bombed" at the Paramount in New York on their first trip east. Microphones and amplifiers were not used in those days on the stage, and the audience in that cavernous house simply could not hear them. Megaphones were out of the question because Rinker needed both hands to play the piano, and Bing's hands were busy banging at a cymbal. They just couldnt be heard. It had little to do with the New York audiences being too sophisticated for their act. Fulton believes that one of the first uses of a microphone in a theater was when Bing made his triumphant personal appearance at the Paramount some five years later.

ARTISTS & CHARACTERS

CHICAGO.—Jack Fulton—stratosphere tenor; descendant of steamboat inventor Robert Fulton; one-time member of the famous Whiteman Trio and roommate of Bing Crosby; haberdashery businessman; erstwhile bandleader; last starred on the networks in "Poetic Melodies," "Just Entertainment," and "Laugh Liner"—has just returned to the air as soloist of Anson Weeks' "Lovely Lady," Sunday on CBS, replacing Skip Farrell. And the many Fulton fans will probably be clamoring for a Coast-to-Coast expansion of this program, which is now heard chiefly through the Middle West.

Tenor Jack Fulton is back on the air as soloist of "Lovely Lady" (Sun., CBS). Jack is five feet eleven, weighs about 175 pounds, has brown wavy hair and blue eyes, likes golf, photography, flying

Jack Fulton was "Big Time" himself

In between shows at the Paramount, the Rhythm Boys and the Sweet Trio (Jack, "Skin" Young, and Charlie Gaylord) would alternate in entertaining the waiting audience in the lobby. The Whiteman fans would gather around the piano and the vocalists prior to taking their seats in the audience inside the theater.

It was after the release of "Mississippi Mud" written by Harry Barris, that the careers of the Rhythm Boys took off in high gear. Fulton feels that Barris played a big part in turning the fortunes of the group around. It is interesting to contemplate what might have happened had Barris not joined the boys and Whiteman had terminated their contracts.

Looking back some sixty-odd years, Jack recalls that everybody in the band seemed to like Bing. "He had a great personality and he was very sharp witted. Pretty much of a loner". Bing would disappear for days at a time while he and Jack shared hotel rooms together while travelling with the Whiteman road group.

BACKSTAGE IN CHICAGO

Jack Fulton returns to air; Wayne King jaunts to New Orleans; new quiz show coming

Bing always wore his hat during rehearsals in a theater. Once when the band was playing the New York Paramount for a 12-week engagement, sharing the bill with such entertainers as Ruth Etting and Joe "Wanna Buy A Duck" Penner, Jack noticed that during rehearsals Bing always sat out in the audience, reading something. Hat perched atop his head, reading. It seemed that Bing was always reading, a family trait shared by his younger brother, Bob. Fulton had formed a close friendship with Bob through the years, and recognized this striking similarity in their habits. Both liked to read, and both were highly intelligent.

Jack remembers with some amusement a real estate deal in Teaneck, New Jersey, made available to band members by Ferde Grofe, long-time arranger with Whiteman. It called for each person to put up one thousand dollars. Bing didn't have enough cash, so he agreed to put up five-hundred dollars for half a share. When the time came to actually put up the pledged money, Bing was unable to do it. Jack and Charles Strickfadden, the saxaphonist, chipped in two hundred and fifty dollars apiece, and bought out Bing's half-share, in addition to their own full shares. The irony of this aborted investment for Bing was although he couldn't come up with the relatively modest five hundred dollars, within a few short years he would be making five thousand a week at the Paramount. By the way, nothing ever came of the Teaneck investment venture, and the nine Whiteman musicians lost their shirts.

When Jack and Thelma had their home in New York, Bing would visit them whenever he was in their vicinity. He dropped by one night and said he needed a shave. Jack had just purchased a very sharp Gem Razor and warned Bing (who was a trifle tipsy) to be careful. A short time later, Bing walked out of the bathroom with tiny bits of toilet tissue covering a multitude of cuts all over his face.Realizing the humor of his appearance, Bing had a good laugh at himself. This was the same face that someday would be the best-known in the world. But on ths evening, Bing's own mother would be hard pressed to recognize him.

Mike Pingatore, classy banjoist and mainstay of the Whiteman rhythm section, preferred to eat Italian food whenever he could get it. Once when the orchestra was on tour, Pingatore, as was his custom, sought out the local Italian eatery, When he returned to the hotel, he began raving about the great food served at the place. Many of the band members, including Bing, went over to the restaurant for dinner. A significant number of them began to consume large quantities of "Dago" red wine with their meal. It was at this time that the Rhythm Boys were starting to get "hot", and were important to Whiteman as a part of the orchestra's performances before the public. "Pops" knew nothing of the Italian restaurant and the wine.Later, when the band was scheduled to perform, the lights came up to reveal one of the pianists fast asleep with his head on the keyboard. Jack thought that Paul was going to fall right into the pit. Regaining his composure, he announced his increasingly popular Rhythm Boys. The curtains parted and out came the solitary figure of Harry Barris, pushing one of the miniature pianos, and prepared to play, sing, and bang the piano lid in his one-man show. Bing was nowhere in sight. Jack Fulton recalls that Whiteman was so disgusted that he threw down his baton, stalked off the bandstand, and did not return. Jack still relishes the memory of that humorous episode that has not faded through the years.

A little known fact now revealed by the trombonist-singer was that both he and Bing were fired by the producers of the Old Gold Radio Show, because of some foul-up on the program. Since they were sorely needed by Whiteman, he had them hired back - at more money than before - as part of a quartet which included Al Rinker and Austin "Skin" Young. Jack tells another variation to the story of how Mildred Bailey joined the band. The Old Gold Quartet would rehearse at Fulton's apartment. She came up one night and sang for them, and the four of them hired her. A short time later, on the train going to San Francisco, Mildred was aboard with all the Whiteman musicians. According to Jack, it was on this train that the quartet introduced Mildred to Whiteman with "Here is your girl singer". She became a favorite of radio listeners tuned to the Old Gold radio show.

Commenting on Bing as a singer, Jack queried "Did you ever hear him (Bing) with just Eddie Lang or Buddy Cole with four or five pieces, singing without any lyrics?" The Author then interjected "He had a good sense of jazz". Jack's immediate response was "He had a good sense of everything!"He feels that when Bing was in Hollywood in the thirties and forties making motion pictures that he was singing at his greatest. (Jack then spontaneously began to sing a phrase from the song "Moonlight Becomes You") "He was tremendous! He used to knock me out when I heard him sing like that."

Jack was asked if he ever saw much of Bing after the crooner left Whiteman. As it turns out, not very much. In later years, Jack saw him at the Black Hawk Restaurant in Chicago, where brother Bob was playing. Bing was as bald as a bat. When Jack wrote the song "Make America Proud Of You", Bing was playing the Palace Theater in Los Angeles. Larry Crosby took Jack over to see him in his dressing room. Bing gave his approval for Larry to send out the recording to some of the top artists in the business, with Bing's recommendation. As was sometimes Bing's wont, he acted very aloof to Jack and more or less ignored him. Jack didn't allow Bing's behavior to bother him very much. Al Rinker and Harry Barris never got over it.

Returning to the Whiteman Days: The recording of "Constantinople" took no less than thirteen takes. Many of the recordings were done in the morning when the musicians and singers "were half asleep". The orchestra usually played until late at night. There was one time they were playing the Paramount, while doubling at the Capitol Theater,which meant not getting to bed each night until two in the morning. Any collector listening to Bing in the early Whiteman recordings knows of the frequent soft humming in the background to back up a vocalist. Arrangers, such as Challis and Grofe, suggested this humming effect in lieu of the band's brass and reed sections that could drown out the vocal because of the comparitively crude recording techniques of the 1920's. Musicians and vocalists all got fifty dollars for making one side of a recording: it didn't matter if you were featured as the vocalist, or were humming softly in the background. Jack supplemented his income quite well at these sessions, receiving fifty dollars for playing the trombone and fifty extra when he also sang. Once when Jack was discussing his inability to make a recording session with Whiteman, it was brought out that Jack was only getting twenty five dollars a side. Paul expressed immediate concern, and told Jack this was an error. He had the prior recording dates checked out, and Jack and all the other vocalists who had not been paid properly were given checks for arrears amounts due them. Jack received a handsome one for a thousand dollars. Jack is quick to point out that Whiteman could have said, "From now on, you're going to get fifty". Being the gentleman that he was, "Pops" made sure that his boys were properly taken care of. That's one of the reasons that the members of the orchestra respected him so much and referred to him as "Pops". He enjoyed practical jokes and kidding as much as members of his band. Jack recalled that once when the band was rehearsing. after Bing had left Whiteman and was receiving great acclaim, brother Everett happened to walk into the room. The rotund and jovial bandleader shouted across to Bing's older brother "Here comes the wrong Crosby!"

A chuckle came into Jack's voice as he reminisced about fellow trombonist, Boyce Cullen, who assisted on the vocal assignments from time to time. Cullen was very slow in putting down his trombone and getting to the microphone. It got to be a source of great amusement for the rest of the singers. He was always the last to make it. Jack and Charlie Gaylord would grab each other by the hand, and squeeze it to keep from breaking up completely at Cullen's late arrivals.

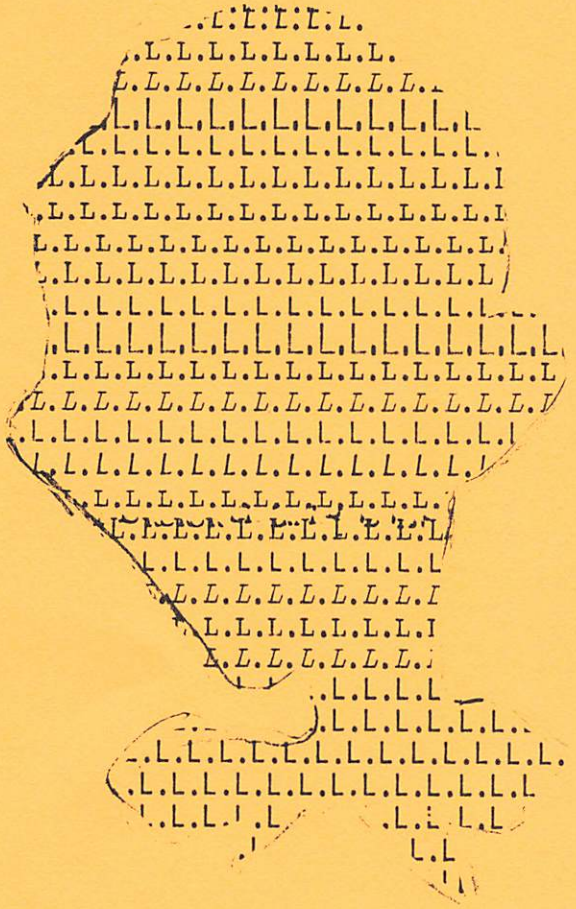
A special kind of fondness creeps into Jack Fulton's voice when he mentions the name of Jimmy Dorsey. Jimmy was Jack's best friend while they were playing in the Whiteman band. (Bill Challis also was a dear friend of Jimmy's, dating back to the days when they both were in the Goldkette Orchestra). Jack's friendship with the elder Dorsey continued throughout their careers and until Jilly's untimely death in 1957.

Another very close friend of Jack's during the Whiteman days was the legendary Bix Beiderbecke, who died of alcoholism before reaching the age of thirty. Jack used to talk to Bix with tears in his eyes, trying to get the cornetist to lay off the booze. Jack sat directly behind Bix on the bandstand. Because Bix couldn't read notes on an arrangement, Jack would often tap him on the shoulder as a signal to come in. Jack recalled one recording session for the song "Sweet Sue". Bix was slightly tipsy. He had an unorthodox way of planting his fingers on the valves, straight out rather than curved and bent. Somehow, during the making of the recording, one of his fingers got caught and he kept repeating the same note. This portion of the record is considered by many jazz buffs to be a great example of Bix's more inventive and original techniques in playing the cornet. Bix hated to stand up and take a bow. He never stood up straight in an erect posture, always slightly bent over. The reason was that he was worried that the small flask or bottle in his back pocket would slip out and fall to the floor. Whiteman caught on after a while. What kind of a person was this man who had jazz musicians crowding around him wherever he played? According to Fulton:"Modest, unassuming, and a real gentleman".

Among the musicians that Bing liked being around was Joe Venuti. Once when playing a lounge show in Las Vegas, Joe's gambling got him hooked for twenty-five thousand dollars. Venuti later confided to Jack that "the old boy (Bing) got me out of it". Joe's madcap ways would get him into a lot of trouble. Jack reveals that WHiteman fired Venuti once and "Paul loved the guy". The rest of the musicians in the band all contributed ten dollars apiece and hired him back for the recording session!

Jack remarked that "some of the funniest things that I have seen in my life involved Joe Venuti". The headwaiter at a major Minneapolis hotel told Jack this story about the "crazy Italian": At the end of a long dining room in the hotel, Venuti was leading his small orchestra. The headwaiter, who was stationed at the opposite end of the room walked the entire length of the room, tapped Venuti on the shoulder, and told him, "Joe, this is the early part of the evening, and our diners like to converse with one another. You're playing too loud, and they can't hear themselves. Can you play a little more softly, please?" Joe nodded, and turned back to his musicians, while the headwaiter walked clear back to his post. Venuti explained : "He says they can't hear us!" Wherupon they began to play twice as loud. The headwaiter couldn't believe what he was hearing. He rushed down to the other end of the room again, nudged Venuti's arm and told him, "You must have misunderstood what I told you. I want you to play softer, not louder!" Mission accomplished, he returned to his station. Joe turns to his group and tells them "He says they still can't hear us!" Now, you've got to admit", Jack laughs, "to do that you've got to be some kind of a nut!"

THIS PAGE IS FOR VERN L. VASEY



Not once, but twice in heading up articles, we have omitted his middle initial - something which we ordinarily would not do.

For this we apologize; here, Vern, is an assortment of Ls - take your pick, and fill in the blanks! It wasn't intentional.

The Editor

special notice!

CAREFULLY REMOVE THIS OUTER WRAPPER BY TEARING LOOSE FROM THE TWO STAPLES
DO NOT TEAR OFF THE COLORED SHEETS IMMEDIATELY UNDER THE WRAPPER _ THEY
ARE THE OUTER COVERS OF YOUR MAGAZINE

AIR MAIL

BINGANG

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF CLUB CROSBY FOUNDED IN 1936
Post Office Box 8283 • Sacramento, California 95818

FIRST CLASS MAIL

PRINTED MATTER

PLEASE DELIVER TO

KEN W. CROSSLAND
7 WHEATCROFT VIEW
LANDMERE COURT,WEST BRIDGFORD
NOTTINGHAM NG2 7PE
ENGLAND